

T4EU STRATEGIC POLICY CONFERENCE**UNIVERSITIES SHAPING THE FUTURE: BUILDING RESILIENT
SOCIETIES THROUGH INNOVATION AND GLOBAL IMPACT****October 21–22, 2025****VMU Kaunas, Lithuania****Organized by:** Vytautas Magnus University (VMU), Transform4Europe Alliance (T4EU)**CONCEPT NOTE**

Although for almost a millennium it was universities that functioned as primary hubs for the advancement of intellectual thought and visionary leadership, their trendsetting and pioneering position in society has been immensely diminishing, especially in Europe. As the means of remedy, the European University initiative that is currently uniting 65 alliances was introduced to strengthen European higher education institutions and their role in boosting European identity, but also competitiveness, technological advancement and an overall societal resilience.

In the wake of the rambling global crises and mounting uncertainty, resilience has become a vital societal asset and personal skill and has been chosen as the main axis of action during the presidency of Vytautas Magnus University (VMU) in the Transform4Europe (T4EU) Alliance in 2025. Resilience will also be the focal point in the Strategic Policy Conference held at VMU on 21–22 October to mark the conclusion of the presidency year.

The main goal of the conference is to bring together not only academic leaders, experts, and students from the T4EU and other European University alliances, but also leading European and Lithuanian political figures, global partners, and key stakeholders. Together, they will engage in discussions on resilience from multiple perspectives, including the need to shift from reactive crisis management to proactive resilience with the focus on cooperation among governments, private sector partners, and citizens, closer cooperation between NATO and the EU, building and expanding structures for cooperation between the two organizations, the global and European transformation of democracies, societies, and technologies. A Policy Paper on Resilience Competency will be finalized and shared, drawing on the expertise and insights generated during the conference.

PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

Time	Activities
21st OCTOBER (DAY 1)	
8:30–9:00	Registration & Welcome Coffee
9:00–9:30	Welcome Remarks Opening Speech
9:30–10:15	Session 1A: Europe's Resilience in a Shifting Global Order Plenary. Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Navigating Global Uncertainty through European Unity■ Leadership and Strategic Resilience
10:15–10:45	Session 1B: Enlarged therefore more resilient EU? Plenary. Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Universities as hubs for expertise and innovation■ Building academic and societal bridges between the EU member and acceding states■ Leading knowledge communication, countering/dispelling disinformation
10:45–11:00	The Handover of the T4EU Presidency to Sofia University
11:00–11.45	Networking Coffee Break

11:45–13:00	Session 2A. Democracies Under Pressure Round Table Discussion. Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Strategic governance for resilience in uncertain times ■ Responding to disinformation, polarization, and digital threats to knowledge ■ Universities as stabilizing forces in democratic and conflict-affected societies ■ Safeguarding academic values and institutional autonomy under geopolitical pressure
13:00–14:30	Networking Lunch & T4EU Innovation Agora Launch*
14:30–15:45	Session 2B: Individual Resilience: Preparing Minds for an Unpredictable World Round Table Discussion. Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mental health and well-being ■ Individual resilience in the face of uncertainty and change ■ Future-proof skills and adaptability across the lifespan ■ Universities as environments for personal growth and lifelong learning
15:45–17:00	Session 3A: Science, Innovation, and Universities' Global Competitiveness Round Table Discussion. Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Strategic integration of universities and high-tech sectors ■ Global research alliances and knowledge sovereignty ■ Europe's scientific competitiveness through talent, cooperation, and innovation
18:00–20:00	Culture Uncorked: Wine & Snacks Soirée
22nd OCTOBER (DAY 2)	
09:00–10:30	Session 3B. From Local Roots to Global Reach: Higher Education and Societal Renewal Round Table Discussion. Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Higher education as a driver of societal and policy transformation ■ Regional and global partnerships for inclusive and resilient futures ■ Universities advancing innovation, equity, and sustainability ■ Knowledge diplomacy and leadership in a changing world
10:30–11:00	Closing remarks Policy and Strategic Directions for Universities Signing of MoA with Global Partners
11:00–12:00	Networking Coffee Break Final reflections & commitments from stakeholders Deal & Go – Informal networking discussions

**The T4EU Innovation Agora — an open space for dialogue, collaboration, and showcasing resilience-building initiatives across the global academia & stakeholders*